



**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA
LAND USE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

Friday, August 26, 2016

Committee met at 9:00AM., this date, at Town Hall, 2050-B Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been met. Present were Committee members Councilmember Rita Langley (Chair), Mayor Pat O'Neil and Councilmember Chauncey Clark; Staff: Zoning Administrator Henderson, Asst. to Administrator Darrow and Building Official Robinson.

- 1. Call to Order.** Chair Langley called the meeting to order, stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law and all members were present; 15 audience members (1 media).
- 2. Meeting Agenda: Committee accepted published agenda with no changes**
- 3. Town Comprehensive Plan (2018 Update): Discuss timeline and funding for Plan review and update**

Zoning Administrator Henderson:

- SC Code Title 6, Chapter 29 requires a rewrite of a Town's strategic long range plan every 10 years and an update every 5 years; Town is due for full 10-year review in 2018; last update was 2013 and last full re-write was 2008.
- Previously the Town used the BCD-COG for the 1998 and 2008 Plan re-write.
- Staff recommends the following:
 - Timeline: strive for spring 2017 kick-off
 - Change to format of Plan for web accessibility and to make the Plan readable for residents
 - Obtain planning consultant to spearhead the design, format and preparation of the Plan. Obtain quotes from BCD-COG and private consulting firms.

Zoning Administrator Henderson meets with Katherine Basha of BCD-COG on August 29, 2016 to discuss scope of services BCD-COG can offer.

Public Questions/Comments:

Wayne Guckenberger, 2105 Pettigrew, questioned the cost of previous Plan updates and why other municipalities update their plans on different timelines.

Zoning Administrator Henderson noted the Town paid BCD-COG in 2008 \$5,000 for a re-write of the Comprehensive Plan, using the 1998 Plan format. Municipalities update their Plans different years, depending upon their previous re-write: the 10-year rewrite requirement begins from the last full Plan re-write/update.

Retain Comprehensive Plan Update (2018) on Committee's next agenda

4. Tree Pruning Ordinance: Review Tree Commission Recommendations

Zoning Administrator Henderson

Background:

- Resident questioned guidelines for regulating tree pruning with the Tree Commission
- Town ordinances do not regulate this activity – currently ordinance language is subjective and unenforceable;
- Tree Commission expressed the goal of protecting big trees, namely grand live oaks as it reviewed pruning processes for neighboring communities. Commission recommends establishing an ordinance to address tree pruning that would apply industry standards (ANSI 300) to large trees (16" dbh or larger)
- New process would be: owner (or representative) permits a tree pruning permit (no fee); staff would evaluate and approve trimming.

Committee Questions:

Committee asked what is incorporated in ANSI 300 standards.

Staff: ANSI 300 standards are a catalog of standards that refer to tree pruning related to tree protection of root systems and tree development. It is the national standard for tree protection.

Committee inquired about unintended consequences that might arise from enacting this ordinance, whether the ordinance could be effectively enforced and what due process would be afforded to residents appealing a Staff decision, and whether the Town could achieve the goal of large tree protection through means other than legislation, such as educational outreach.

Committee asked for additional information on this matter, such as:

- 1.) What additional expectations and costs to residents might flow from imposing ANSI 300 standards for all pruning and tree protection activity?
- 2.) How this ordinance would be enforced for residents doing yard work as well as hiring contractors? Could ordinance be enforced effectively?
- 3.) What would be appeal process for residents denied pruning request by Town?

Public Questions/Comments:

Council member Mark Howard, 1820 Central Avenue, asked if tree pruning protection would apply to select tree specimen or to all trees based upon minimum size.

Zoning Administrator Henderson noted all trees in excess of 16" dbh would be afforded this protection, except those trees on the Town's invasive species list.

Wayne Guckenberger, 2105 Pettigrew Street, asked about tree pruning related to construction on a lot, especially new construction.

Zoning Administrator Henderson noted Staff works closely with owners with construction matters to provide flexibility regarding trees on lots under development.

Luke Lewis, 2101 Pettigrew Street, submitted current tree protection process seems to work fine; questioned why the Town would need another regulation? Suggested public outreach and communication would be a better, first step for the Town, in lieu of enacting another ordinance.

Susan Middaugh, 2420 Raven Drive, noted that with large tree pruning residents normally retain a professional arborist or landscaping company. Enforcement of a tree pruning ordinance could be accomplished through the professional pruning company's business license and permit.

Kimberly Brannon, 2108 Pettigrew, asked if a pruning permit requirement would create a work delay and how long the review process would take.

Zoning Administrator noted that the review process could be accomplished digitally with applicants sending Staff an email with photos and a site plan/application; thereafter Staff would be able to visit the site and inspect the tree.

MOTION: Councilmember Clark recommended to Council that the Town begin with an educational approach to residents regarding tree pruning and protection, as outlined in ANSI 300 standards; seconded by Mayor O'Neil.

Discussion: Committee noted the Town could review the efficacy of educational outreach initiatives and reserved the right to enact an ordinance in the future, if needed. The Tree Commission could be tasked with developing an educational outreach program with Staff.

Call for the question: MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

5. Island Entrance Sign (Ben Sawyer Bridge): Review and Discuss

Background: Town residents and the Park Foundation volunteered funds to beautify the entrance of the Island from Ben Sawyer Bridge with landscaping and replacement of the current "welcome" sign. Council has held numerous discussions on the sign design and received public input at each meeting. This Committee discussed the sign design at its July meeting and recommended a simple sign design to Council.

Status: Council member Clark is scheduled to meet with the Park Foundation board on August 30, 2016 to obtain their feedback on a proposed simple sign design: no tide clock and room for potential electronic board in the future.

Comptroller Blanton noted a Town employee designed the Town's logo and he is available to offer sign design options to the Town. Chair Langley asked that the Town employee forward his

designs to the Town. Currently the Town is receiving unsolicited sign designs by companies and those designs are being archived.

Council member Clark plans to offer a report of his meeting with the Park Foundation at the Council Workshop on September 12, 2016

Committee deferred any additional action on this matter pending September Council Workshop.

6. CRS Program for Public Information Committee – Review recommendations

Zoning Administrator Henderson:

- Town participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) Program that is part of the National Flood Plain Initiative Program (NFIP).
- The Public Information Committee (PPI) is an educational outreach initiative of the CRS program; the Town has established a local PPI Committee.
- The Town's PPI Committee is comprised of the Planning Commission, insurance representatives and Town Staff. This Committee has established a draft outreach program to educate residents on flood plain risks and options.
- Planning Commission has approved the draft text of the PPI
- Next step: forward draft PPI text to FEMA for review/feedback
- Then forward FEMA reviewed PPI text to Council for its review and potential approval. Program implementation would follow Council program approval.

Council member Clark asked when the Town might expect the promised updated FEMA maps. Building Official Robinson noted the maps are due in September.

Council member Sarah Church, 1655 Atlantic Avenue, asked if there would be any automatic changes to flood elevations when the maps are published.

Building Official Robinson noted that Charleston County, as a whole, has 180 days to appeal the maps and there may be an appeal. The question Town Staff is working to discern is whether the appeal process will delay the Town's ability to adopt the FEMA flood maps if Charleston County has pending appeals.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:13AM (Mayor O'Neil motioned; Councilmember Clark seconded; unanimously passed)

Respectfully submitted,
Rita Langley, Chair
Land Use & Natural Resources Committee

Approved at the September 12, 2016 Council Workshop